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STATEMENT

by

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ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**TO THE OPENING OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

New York, 2 May 2011

Distinguished Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join H.E. Mr. László Borbély, Chair of the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in welcoming you to this important session.

This session has special significance for two reasons.

- First, it will cover a key set of themes in relation to the sustainable development agenda, especially the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production.
- Second, this will be the last session before the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, where important decisions are expected on the institutional framework for sustainable development.

Last year, at the Commission's 18<sup>th</sup> session, you reviewed progress made in meeting international commitments in five thematic areas: Transport, Chemicals, Waste Management, Mining and the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP).

This review led to the identification of critical challenges and constraints impeding progress in these five areas.

And it showed us that we have real work to do.

Globally, unsustainable consumption and production threatens to exceed the carrying capacity of life support systems. This imbalance is obvious - whether measured by greenhouse

gas concentrations, by the number of endangered species, by rates of deforestation, or by decreases in fish stocks.

Much more can and must be done across the globe to pursue inclusive and environmentally sound economic growth. We must accelerate our efforts to advance sustainable development and to meet our commitments to future generations.

Distinguished Delegates:

It is important that this session delivers concrete, actionable decisions on all five themes.

Briefly, let me refer to each of the themes.

- First, transport is vitally important to development. We must: - ensure access to affordable transport, especially for the rural poor; - expand public and non-motorized transport in cities; and - transform transport systems to address climate change, local pollution, energy security and safety.
- Second, sound management of chemicals and waste is essential to safeguarding human health and the environment; technical, informational and institutional capacities need to be strengthened where they are weak.
- Third, creating an enabling environment for sustainable mining is of utmost importance. Mining should contribute to economic development, respect concerns of local and indigenous populations, protect the environment, and provide a source of public revenue to be used effectively for poverty eradication and sustainable development.
- And fourth, we need to change our consumption and production patterns so that our economies proceed on sustainable paths, and so that we are able to address key global challenges like climate change, water and other resource scarcities, and environmental degradation.

We have identified areas where more progress is needed. We know what the challenges and obstacles are. Now we need to find solutions by combining global support, normative guidance, institutional strengthening, and national actions. We need policy options and practical measures to address the issues identified during last year's review.

A positive outcome at this session would demonstrate Member States' willingness to work together on solutions. Your collaboration is needed to bridge critical implementation gaps and address important emerging challenges.

All eyes are on us to launch an ambitious framework this year to support countries and other actors move towards sustainable consumption and production. Such an initiative would send the right message and generate positive momentum towards a successful conference in Rio next June.

A 10-Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production would promote development that is within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and contribute to progress on the 3 pillars of sustainable development. It would advance:

- the social pillar by encouraging sustainable production of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life for the poor;
- the environmental pillar by minimizing the use of toxic materials and the emission of waste and pollutants; and
- the economic pillar by promoting economic development through a more efficient use of natural resources.

Such a framework is key to ensuring a wealthier and more sustainable world for present and future generations.

Nine years have elapsed since governments at the Johannesburg Summit called for the development of a 10-year framework. We must respond to calls for an ambitious, feasible and actionable 10YFP on SCP.

The 10-year framework must support member States and all stakeholders in scaling up successful initiatives, addressing new and emerging challenges, sharing knowledge widely, accessing technical expertise, forging partnerships and mobilizing financial resources.

Sustainable consumption and production need to be mainstreamed into the thinking of all stakeholders and into the decision making of governments and other organizations, including the UN system.

Since its establishment almost 20 years ago, the Commission on Sustainable Development has been considered the highest level body for sustainable development within the UN System. However, lately there has been some concern about the Commission's effectiveness regarding implementation on the ground.

As you know, the institutional framework for sustainable development is one of the two themes of Rio+20. How the Commission should be reformed and strengthened will be a major subject of discussion next year. The reflection and dialogue on how to strengthen, not just the Commission but the whole institutional framework for sustainable development, is advancing. We must continue to make good progress in this vital area.

This Commission session is also in a unique position to contribute to Rio+20's other theme: green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Many of the topics you will discuss here on the five themes are directly related to green economy. Your work here can offer considerable insight as we prepare for Rio.

Ladies and Gentleman,

The United Nations system looks forward to working in partnership with all of you -- with governments, local authorities, business and industry, and other Major Groups. Let us all endeavor towards achieving common goals of prosperity, peace, and sustainability for all.

I wish you all a very productive session.

Thank you.

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